

# THE EAGLE!

A photograph of two people walking away from the camera on a wide, sandy dirt path. The person on the left is wearing a black jacket and light blue pants, carrying a white bag. The person on the right is wearing a grey hoodie, black shorts, and a black cap. The path is flanked by dry, brownish vegetation. The overall tone is warm and slightly desaturated.

*the end?*

*Vol 92 Issue 4*



# THE EAGLE

Success in the Water: 04-05

STH Bright Future: 08-09

Father-Son Retreat 12-13

Why You Should Learn an  
Instrument: 16-17

A Statistical Analysis of  
Sports: 20-21

STH Rocketry: 24-25

Elden Ring Review: 28-29



Eagle on the Rise: 06-07

Senior Retreat Recap: 10-11

Batman Review: 14-15

Photos of the Year: 18-19

The Case For Kickball: 22-23

Why Movie Theaters Should  
End: 26-27

Slabwatch 2022: 30-31



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### QUARTER 4



# STH GREATS

FEAT. JOSH MCCLEAN



BY: RUBEN VARA



## Who is Josh McClean?

The Class of 2022's Josh McClean is one of St Thomas' most decorated athletes in history. He is a four year letterman of a St Thomas swim team that, in recent years, has really made name for itself. During his time as an Eagle, Josh has broken a whopping seven records and helped his team claim back-to-back State Championships in 2019 and 2020. In addition to his great talent in the water, Josh is also a respectable esports gamer for the Eagles, with his most notable skills being in Riot Games' Valorant. Josh will be continuing his swimming career at Florida Tech University.

## Records Claimed by the Great:

- 100 FREESTYLE
- 200 FREESTYLE
- 500 FREESTYLE
- 200 IM
- 100 BREAST-STROKE
- MEDLEY RELAY
- FREE RELAY



(Free Relay record holding team with Dylan Sandroock, Josh McClean, Tyler Sandroock, and Carrick Brogan.)

## Some Words From the Great:

### What does swimming mean to you?

"Swimming is everything to me. I've done this sport for majority of my life now and I can't begin to explain the things I've learned through swimming. Work ethic, dedication, how to manage time, etc.. It has impacted me in the greatest ways and I couldn't imagine life without it."

### What would you say are your greatest accomplishments in the sport?

"My greatest accomplishments have to be getting the 7 school records and winning State swimmer of the meet while also winning private school swimmer of the year."

### What do you wish to accomplish in the future?

"I wish to go farther with this sport, and my final goal that I can see in the future for me would be getting into a NCAA final and placing high. I would be satisfied finishing my career at that point and not regret my time."

### What is your message to swimmers and other athletes at STH?

"My message would be to enjoy it, because while records and accomplishments are great, you will never have a closer bond than those that you meet along the journey. But go work for what you want, and be better than you were yesterday."



# EAGLE ON THE RISE:

Landon Donnelly '25 is a freshman golfer at St. Thomas who is looking to continue to help the Eagles soar in the world of golf. Alongside his excellent teammates this season, Landon has enjoyed an incredibly successful season and competed in the State Championship golf tournament in early May.

Landon started playing golf at the age of seven years old on his home course, the Pine Forest Country Club. He began playing with his dad who has been supporting him throughout the entirety of his career as both one of his biggest fans but also as his coach. Over the years he has taken golf more seriously and has truly fallen in love with the sport.

"I knew I was going to fully dedicate myself to competitive golf after 8th grade because I knew that it was something that could take me places I never dreamt of going," Donnelly said.

Donnelly also enjoys the intensity that comes with the game of golf, "competitiveness draws me toward the game. Also the fact that everything is on me" Donnelly said. Golf is one of the most difficult sports as a result of the mental part of the game, "I try to remain calm by telling myself that I cannot change the past and that anything can happen with the other players" Donnelly said. These quotes alone depict Landon's maturity for such a young athlete and it is easy to see how he can be so dominant with this type of drive and attitude. Raymond Davis is

By: Luke Evans



Donnelly '25 after earning the top individual performance at the Clear Springs Tournament.



Donnelly teeing off at a Par 3 looking to birdie the hole.

# LANDON DONNELLY



Donnelly pulls out the driver and crushes his tee shot into the center of the fairway.

the current head golf coach for St. Thomas. He says that Landon is truly a special type of talent, "Landon will be a Division 1 Golfer as long as he maintains the desire and drive. It's my job to support him with goals and help him grow both on and off the course," Davis said.

As a freshman, Landon has already put on a clinic in district play as he was selected to the All District team. He also tied for 4th at the Strake Invitational with a score of 78, and earned 5th Place at the UIL 6A tournament with scores of 77 and 76. Landon has

also earned the honor of being the number one player on the Varsity Golf Team.

While Landon obviously has an incredible style of play all around, shooting impressive scores in the seventies, he says that his favorite club is the pitching wedge and that the best aspect of his game is his short game.

"My favorite club is the pitching wedge because it is extremely versatile...I believe that I can get up and down from anywhere on the course," Landon said.

In his first season on the golf team, Landon has already

made an immediate impact and placed tied for 25th in the State Championship Tournament. Landon has the goal of eventually leading the St. Thomas Golf Team to a State Championship and he personally wants to play Division 1 golf and earn a spot on the Top 500 in the Global Golf Scoreboard.

Landon Donnelly's mental toughness, love for the game, and competitive drive combine to make him a player that will easily find himself playing at a high level in his future and he is well on his way to becoming an STH Great.

CLASS OF 2025



# The Bright Future

by Caleb Davis

# of STH Athletics



## Coach Netzel, Athletic Director

“We appreciate the contributions made by our current senior class, however, as it was a smaller class in numbers, it gave some great early opportunities for our current juniors, sophomores and even freshmen to gain valuable playing experience at the varsity level. This is across all sports in the athletic program. This sets STH Athletics up to have some very successful years moving forward. Starting in 2022-23.”



## Jake Pike (Class of 23’), All State Basketball Player

“Because there are so many returning varsity players, our teams will be winning lots of games with their newfound experience. Then, this will carry over to newer players who can be mentored and carry on the St. Thomas winning traditions.”



Never has the future of St. Thomas athletics looked stronger. While the senior class this year made invaluable contributions to their various sports teams, their lack of total students gave more juniors and sophomores the opportunity to practice and compete on the varsity level. With increased experience comes increased performance, which was very evident from St. Thomas’ various sports teams. Juniors and sophomores were able to get the playing time that they would never have gotten to experience with most senior classes at St. Thomas. This experience for many of the younger athletes resulted in improvements to their level of play that was far greater than projected.

The rapid improvement of many junior

and sophomore athletes indicates the probability of incredibly successful seasons next year. For example, this upcoming football season features fifteen returning starters! This unprecedented amount of returning players leads many to believe that we will have one of the best football seasons in recent memory. Furthermore, the basketball team has four of its five starters returning, as only two players were seniors this past year. The baseball team shows a similar pattern, where they will have six returning starters and over 80% of their team returning for the season next year. This trend repeats itself in every sport at St. Thomas, making the future of St. Thomas athletics appear very promising. The unprecedented amount of varsity experience for next year’s various sports teams will ensure a very successful year for nearly every St. Thomas sport.





# SENIOR RETREAT RECAP

BY: EDWARD SEYMOUR

The school year is almost over and with that leaves another class of St. Thomas High School students. The class of 2022.

"It is really starting to hit all of us now, especially because of the retreat" said Alessio Del Castillo.

The retreat took place at Camp Cho Yeh, the same camp where the freshmen have Camp Aquinas. The special part about the class of 2022 is that they were the first Freshman class to go to Camp Aquinas as their introduction into St. Thomas. They pretty much started and ended their journey at STH at this camp.

When you think of a retreat at a Catholic high school, the main initial reactions in students are negative. They react like this because it is a misconception that there is only going to be mass and presentations about general life. Many students were not originally excited to go until they realized how similar it was going to be to Camp Aquinas their freshman year.

At Cho Yeh, the first day consisted of activities and challenges that could be won for house points or just for fun. There were some short presentations and talks led by Coach Q and Mr. Green, but it was clear that the main focus of the first day was for the students to have fun. There was an obstacle course which was the competition for house points. Then, after lunch, there was a four-hour period of free time where students could choose out of the many available activities.



There was basketball, skeet shooting, paintball, and the pillow to jump around on.

Slayton Vance-Tassin class of '22 is a collegiate athlete when it comes to sporting clays and was eager to help out his friends who were new to shooting clays.

"I had a blast helping my Eagle brothers learn a new sport and teaching them how to shoot properly. It was very enjoyable seeing them succeed," said Slayton. He also helped fellow publications member Alessio hit over half of his targets.

Basketball was another activity that they offered. Tristan Esquivel and many others spent most of their time there.

"Pickup games at basketball allowed some of us to reconnect with each other because of different schedules and classes," said Tristan.

Lastly, paintball was another activity that many were new to.

"Paintball was a blast, I've never played before, and I would definitely recommend it to anyone who hasn't played before," said Antonio Gutierrez.

Although this retreat is a ton of fun, it is not just about the activities. There are many opportunities for the students to get closer to God and strengthen their relationship with Him. Many of the Juniors are excited for this retreat and can't wait to go. On that list is Junior Jack Keeler. "I cannot wait to improve my relationship with God and my Eagle Brothers at this retreat," said Keeler.



Right: Fathers and Sons talk as they walk to different activities. These walks, though not the main part of the camp, were fanatstic for bonding.



# God, Guns, and Glory

Finding God wih our fathers through competition.

By: Brian Lively

In 2022, St.Thomas Campus Ministry introduced a new mandatory event for the junior class that brought many groans about the students: a father-son retreat. Little did they know that this would be an amazing experience, both for fathers and for sons.

The Father-Son Retreat was a split event. Half the class went in the fall, the other half in the spring. It was, as most student overnight camps are, at Camp Cho-Yeh, and it had all the fun events. This meant paintball, axe-throwing, rifle shooting, leather-making, and all of those fun activities were the center of the camp. Most importantly, the purpose of the retreat was that of learning, specifically learning how to mature into a well-virtued man.

The chief purpose was to guide the maturing of the students



Above: A dad throws an axe at a target. One of the best parts about the Father-Son retreat was the mostly friendly competitions between fathers and sons.

with their fathers. The retreat undoubtedly accomplished this task. At the end of the retreat, the father and son went on a guided walk for about an hour. The “guided” part was a piece of paper containing scriptutual teaching designed to guide the spiritual maturing of the sons during this retreat.

To high-schoolers this may sound lame, but those who actually did the walk agree that it was not that at all.

One of the best parts of the retreat was the competition between Fathers and Sons in these events. Many people consider a dad to be their “old man”, but that did not prevent the fathers from hanging with the teens in these physical events. I remember playing a dad versus son basketball game, and what I learned was that their many years of training their fundamentals far trumped any skill we thought we had. The sons didn’t even play

that bad, but the dads were too careful and too precise, giving them the win.

In addition, after dinner and all the other activities, the students played pick-up games for over three hours. The bonding between the men of St. Thomas is truly a special sight.

“Yeah, the paintball was fun. Being able to play sports was fun especially when it was competitive against the fathers” Matthew Jones ‘23 said.

“The axe-throwing was good, but that’s probably because it’s hard to mess up axe-throwing” Nathan Hulvey ‘23 joked.

The only experience that was not enjoyable was the sleep. Well, unless you were snoring, then the night was just fine. It can only be described as a symphony: one person snored, then the next, then the next, and this continued for hours. Those unfortunate to wake up never slept again.

“It was like a choir of snoring” Matthew remarked.

“I slept through breakfast. I couldn’t fall asleep until midnight”



Above: Andrew Roy ‘23 aims his rifle at a metal duck target. These air rifles were one of many projectile-weapons the fathers and sons enjoyed during the retreat.



Nathan agreed.

Overall, besides the night, the Father-Son Retreat was serendipitous for the juniors. Everyone thought it would be some lame wishy-washy presentation that no one would honestly want to go to, but it ended up being what can be called a “life-changing” experience. The fathers and sons got to compete in activities that both enjoy, as both the elder and the younger do these activities when they are in their teen years. The presentation was not wishy-washy, but was instead a message important for every man on the planet. As advice for the classes below, the junior class hopes they get to experience it as well.

Above and Right: Juniors and their fathers work leather. The options on materials to make included anything from bracelets to belt buckles.







Review By: Ethan Vinson

A city plagued by darkness and one man with the power of fear. The Batman takes a new approach to the meanings of vigilante and justice. A creature in the night, hunting thieves and murderers as an outlet for his own personal torment. Bruce Wayne has no flair or boisterous personality. He has yet to find the difference between hero and terror.

The Batman is a film that defines the superhero genre as one that can take many forms when used correctly. In this story, Batman is taken back to the comic accurate roots as the “world’s greatest detective”. Robert Pattinson’s Batman combined with Jeffery Wright’s Lieutenant Gordon make a detective duo tasked with unraveling the corruption exposed by a serial killer at large. The notorious psychopath behind the murders of Gotham City’s corrupt leaders is the Riddler, played by Paul Dano. Other characters placed around the sprawling Gotham city are Catwoman (played by Zoe Kravitz), The Penguin played by (Colin Farrell), and the leader of the mob Carmine Falcone (Played by John Turturro). Director Matt Reeves incorporate each of these characters into a vast city drained of all hope for a brighter future.

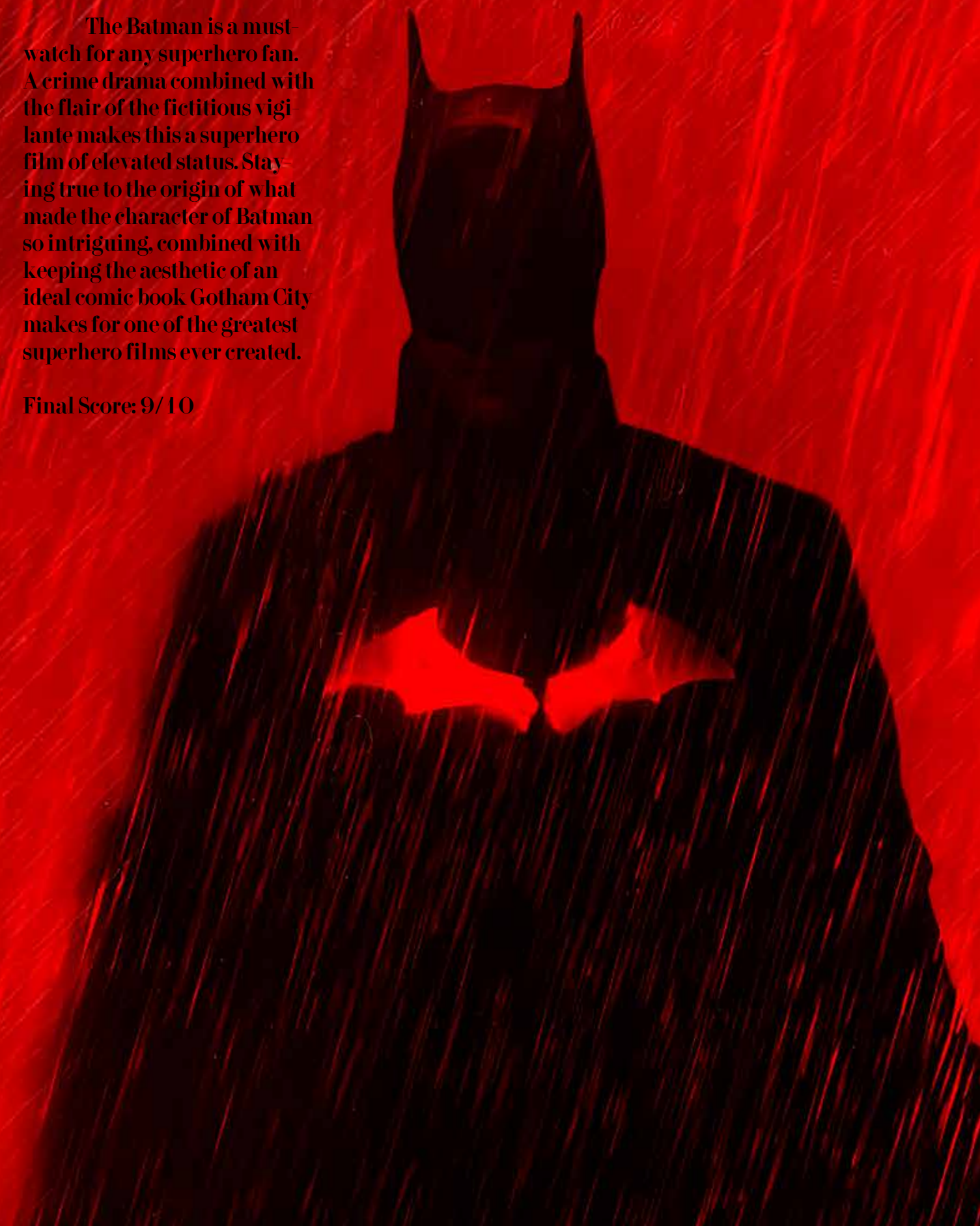
Director Matt Reeves brings new life to a character that has already been por-

trayed numerous times. Instead of already understanding what it means to be The Batman, Pattinson’s character struggles with putting aside self-interest for the greater good. In the first two acts of the movie, it is clear that Reeves was attempting to give the audience a grim impression of Gotham’s ruined government systems. Corruption at every level and branch of government is all being exposed by a serial killer who believes he is a vigilante. It is only in the final act when the bleak setting becomes a more hopeful change as Pattinson’s Batman realizes his own personal grudges won’t save the city. Only The Batman, representing justice can bring the city to a new age of light amidst all the darkness.

Lights, camera, Noir. The Batman is a film that brings a more artistic style to the flow of its scenes. Gotham city is seen to be one of the most advanced and populated cities, yet still gives off the aura of grime and repugnance. Similar to the way Los Angeles is interpreted in the Blade Runner franchise, thanks to the cinematography of Greg Fraiser, the audience is shown fantastic set-pieces filled with strong lighting of oranges and greys as the primary color palette. The Batman is a superhero film that prioritizes the “feel” or ambiance of the movie just as much as the writing and action.

The Batman is a must-watch for any superhero fan. A crime drama combined with the flair of the fictitious vigilante makes this a superhero film of elevated status. Staying true to the origin of what made the character of Batman so intriguing, combined with keeping the aesthetic of an ideal comic book Gotham City makes for one of the greatest superhero films ever created.

Final Score: 9/10





# PICK UP AND PLAY!

By Robert Longo

I can attribute much of my creative inspiration to a video that I watched back in seventh grade--a video that inspired me to learn and speak a new language. Many studies suggest that speaking a different language can cause people to unconsciously change their personality. For a bilingual person, the spanish speaker within them has the same memories and experiences as the english speaker, but the two individuals see themselves in a different way, act differently, and express themselves in a unique way, perhaps without even realizing it. This is how I describe musician-ship: before learning guitar, I assumed that hitting notes on a fretboard is no different than typing on a computer keyboard, however, any musician will tell you that the process of performing music transports you to a different place where only the 'universal language' is spoken. Beyond the cognitive benefits and enjoyment associated with learning an instrument, I believe that becoming a musician can transform anyone as they learn to better appreciate music and express themselves in a completely different way.

Although attempts to learn an instrument are common, it is uncommon that someone puts in the hours to truly develop themselves as a musician. As someone who has been playing guitar for five years, I have enough leisure hours of play to be a

competent musician. However, Nico Lopez (22) is proof that strong dedication and conscious practice is all it takes to master anything in a short period of time. A little less than a year ago, Nico decided to buy his first instrument: a bass guitar. Since then, Nico has learned music theory, how to sight-read bass tabs, played for a band, and performed at a live venue.

**Nico, tell me about your early exposure to music... what type of music did your parents play for you at a young age?**

*"I would listen to the radio with my mom every day on the way to school. We would sing together whenever a song we knew came on the radio--mostly spanish music or pop."*

**Does anyone in your family have a background in music?**

*"My grandpa and his cousins used to play corridos in a band at family gatherings and parties. Other than that, no one influenced me to play an instrument in my family."*

**What prompted you to start learning an instrument?**

*Seeing some of my friends play songs and have fun playing instruments on the weekends inspired me to want to learn on my own. No one forced me to play or held my hand through the process, but the people in The Vue, before and after we made the band*



*just passively encouraged me to keep getting better and better.*

**What type of music did you listen to at age 10 (5th grade), 13 (8th grade), 16 (last year)?**

*Nightcore and pop, hip hop and rap, and indie and hip hop respectively.*

**Are there any songs/artists that you listen to differently than you did before learning the bass?**

*I have almost completely stopped listening to rap music and focused on listening to indie, japanese pop, 90s hip hop, and alternative music because I can appreciate the great deal of time and effort that goes into more complicated songs after learning to*

*play the bass.*

**What is the best part about being a musician/playing an instrument?**

*The best part about being a musician is being able to satisfy my curiosity and appreciation for music, while simultaneously allowing other people to enjoy the special feeling of hearing live music.*

Similar to Nico, there are very few musicians in my family, and I was certainly not trained to be a musician from a young age. Although many people believe that you must start young or have 'music in your blood', me and Nico are proof that anyone can be a competent musician.





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Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, the yearbook and magazine publication staffs have been hard at work documenting St. Thomas life. This year, it has been both staffs' mission to document every aspect of student life: from the football games to the Lego club meetings. Because not every great picture can make it into the magazine or yearbook, both staffs wanted to showcase some of their proudest shots of the year through this magazine spread.



11

# PHOTOS OF THE YEAR

Robert Longo: 1, 3, 4, 7, 10, 14, 16  
Casey Blackburn: 2  
Alessio Del Castillo: 5  
Peyton Woodlief: 6, 9  
Slayon Vance-Tassin: 8  
Ethan W: 11  
Bruno Castilla: 17  
Alex Yankowsky: 18  
Ethan Vinson: 19



# A Statistical Analysis of Sports

By: Arjun Chahal

As time has gone by, sports have gotten more and more competitive. People often wonder why there is this change in skill and overall ability across all sports. While it is true that sports are more well researched and training and recovery programs have been created, the main reason for this change is the gradual introduction of sports statistics.

Improved technology has opened the possibilities. First, simply having a video recording of a game is monumental to analyze things to improve on in the future. Second and most interestingly, statistics. An example of a sport that

incorporates statistics into their sport would be baseball. Stats such as ERA and OBP have been leading factors in measuring a players skill level. These stats also make it much easier to recruit new players with a lowered risk of the player flopping. I am confident that as technology changes, we will see even more improvement in the general skill level of professional sports.

Something in development that will make a huge difference in the future of sports is virtual reality. Realistic simulators are already in use for motorsports such as Formula One. Not only do these

simulators imitate driving, newer models also include air resistance, wheel lockup, and G force. Other sports have seen the sucess of these simulators and are closely following suit. It is not a qestion of if, it is a question of when realistic simulators are realeased for professional athletes in sports such as football, baseball, basketball, and more.

The future of sports is exciting, and I cannot wait to see what happens next. "Sports keep improving with time" said Diego Sanchez '23. My prediction? The skill level of sports will continue to improve, and with it, the viewership too.



## The Complexity of Baseball:

-Each Baseball game has 12,386,344 possible plays

-There are 121 different statistics recorded in games, including UBR, which examines “the positive and negative effects of a baserunners actions”

-The highest career batting average ever recorded in Major League Baseball was a .3662 by Ty Cobb; meaning he got on base in nearly 37% of his at-bats



## March Madness Brackets:

-If you pick randomly, your chance of building a perfect bracket is 1 in 9.2 quintillion

-If you pick based on statistics and projections, your chance of building a perfect bracket is 1 in 5.7 billion

-You have a better chance of winning the Powerball lottery twice in a row than building a perfect bracket

-If you somehow guess 75 percent of the game results, your chances are still only 1 in 74 million

-The chances are so low that Warren Buffet offered a billion dollars to anyone who could build a perfect bracket in 2014, no one did it.







# The Case for Kickball

By: Brian Lively

Above: Andrew Roy '23 gets amped up in an intense part of the game. While the competition was friendly, their spirit was on complete display throughout the entirety of the matches.

While the “shift” may be banned in professional baseball, this tactic is still very commonplace in kickball. This sport is suspiciously fun for how easy it is to set up, and its intensity can bring together the entire school. Kickball may have even been the jewel of this year’s Fall Olympics. St. Thomas should hold more kickball tournaments for the students because of how fun it is, how it brings together the school, and how it offers students a break from the rigor of school.

Kickball is an undeniably thrilling experience. For some reason, kicking a rubber ball as far as you can is just really, really fun. During the Fall Olympics, where teams were created based on their House, dozens of students watched the final game. It was supposed to only go to around six innings, and those six-innings were crazy, but the game was tied at the end. As a result, the game had to be continued for almost ten more innings. The heat from the suspense in the game rose like a hot oven. Teams switched from offense to defense with no end in sight. Then, a team scored, and the game ended

gloriously.

“It was very interesting. I will say, it was quite the experience being hoisted on the shoulders of Team Wilson and carried off the field” Charles Guscott ‘23, the pitcher on House Wilson recalled.

The game itself is fun, but the true thrill of the experience comes from the competition between friends. There is an underlying sense of the games having some sort of gravity. All of the other games at Fall Olympics, save maybe basketball, feel as if their significance is limited only to the Olympics. St. Thomas should hold more kickball tournaments to rekindle this competitive thrill.

Kickball is very good at bringing classmates together. The House system at St. Thomas already groups students, but it does not create a sense of brotherhood among those house members by itself. House identity and comradery come from the competitions. Take Camp Aquinas for example. Who would care about the houses if not for points gained from each competition?

Right: Tommy Erb '23 celebrates after a huge kick. Kicks are high-risk high-reward because there is always the risk that someone catches the ball. However, if placed just right, they can give your team quite the advantage.



Even though there is no real incentive to do well in House competitions, students still try in them because the competitive nature is so strong. Kickball is undoubtedly competitive. Each house gave its all during the Fall Olympics tournament, especially in the final round. Juniors bonded because of their shared objective: winning the kickball championship.

Even if the fun of kickball is unconvincing, or how it brings together the school, kickball

gives students a break from the academic rigors of school. It is not a secret that St. Thomas students have a lot of work in their day-to-day activities, with very few breaks at the beginning of the year. This is justified by the time given off at the end of the year for Round-Up.

However, Round-up is at the end of the year. Students should not necessarily have more days off of school, but a kickball tournament gives students a temporary rest. You may have to make basic mental calculations when trying to figure out where the ball will land after it is kicked on defense, but besides that kickball is simply just a fun activity.

The tournament may not even have to last the whole day. It could be the last half. The school should have more kickball tournaments because they give students brief breaks from the huge workload given to St. Thomas students.

In all, St. Thomas should hold more kickball tournaments because kickball is fun, bonding, and strangely restful. The thrill of kickball is shown through the crazy championship game during Fall Olympics. The bonding ability is shown through the effort students give to their team. Kickball is a break from academic rigor, leaving students refreshed the next day to continue learning. The school already has a basketball tournament, but it is in the spring, so a fall kickball tournament fits just nicely.



Above: Charles Guscott '23 slides home in the Fall Olympics Championship game. As the players well know, every run mattered in that title game, so this run was very important. Below: Luke Evans '22 makes an on-field adjustment. Strategies by teams during the tournament required teams to adjust.





# ELDEN

By Mitch Onufrow



Elden Ring is a role playing game designed by FromSoftware. It got help from George R. R. Martin for its setting. FromSoftware games are known for being very hard, and satisfying as such. But Elden Ring has far too many problems to fully live up to this. Have you ever been watching a TV show and it doesn't get even remotely good until about 3 45 minute episodes in? That is what playing Elden Ring feels like. Except it takes 30-40 hours for it to get good.

When you start out, the first 10 hours is mindless exploration, but fun exploration nonetheless. Elden Ring has an extremely enchanting world, one which is by far the best of any game I have ever played, and likely of any game I will ever play. It takes time to become accustomed to the world as you learn which enemies don't kill you in 2 seconds. Sadly not too much of the actual plot is explained. The NPCs just call you names and tell you to go places.

The next 10 hours you run around aimlessly again, this time a bit less fun because you've already done it for 10 hours. You fight some more enemies, kill some more bosses, progress to the next area. It's really a cycle, and not always a satisfying one. Killing a boss is satisfying if its hard, otherwise it feels pointless. Going on a long convoluted quest through an extremely annoying cave filled with poison and scarlet rot just for an Item that you aren't going to use feels like a waste of time.

# RING



The third ten hours starts to heat up some more, you start getting more quests from NPCs and have to figure things out. You start making different decisions which change the course of the game. There are 6 unique endings in Elden Ring. You get to choose, but you don't know the outcome until it happens. This is an amazing aspect of the game, but mind you it takes quite some time to get here. There is easily over 80 hours of gameplay for anyone who isn't trying to speed through the game. There is also a lot of customization in characters and different builds. There are so many different ways to play the game and all of them are viable.

However combat is oftentimes unsatisfying. There are only a few weapons that feel like they should feel. The

most satisfying weapons are dual wielded swords, and almost everything else feels clunky and slow. Combat on horseback is horrible. Bows are fun and feel like bows should, but they don't do much damage. Mage builds are fun, and I can't find many complaints about the magic system.

The camera in this game is atrocious to say the least. The hardest part about boss fights, and oftentimes fights in general is the camera. The camera is legitimately the hardest boss in the game. Especially against larger enemies, you are just fighting the boss's feet, and won't be able to see their attacks.

Overall Elden Ring is a 7.8/10. It is certainly worth the time it takes. It has a few drawbacks, but makes up for them well.



# Why Movie Theaters Should End

by Mitch Onufrow

Recently it seems like movies in general have been changing. The steady decline of the Oscars, movies are released on streaming services now, and the coronavirus has forced movie theaters to attract far less people. And while some people might argue that going to a movie theater is better, I would wager that many people would rather watch a movie at home for \$20 than go out to a movie theater.



The experience at home is simply better. For one thing, movie theaters tend to be very dirty or uncomfortable. Worn out by other people who came before and didn't care to keep it clean. With streaming services you don't have to worry about the annoying kid behind you kicking your seat or the fact that you can't put your feet up.

Streaming services also have the added benefit of putting the power in your hands. Hard of hearing? Raise the volume, or better yet, turn subtitles on. Too loud? Lower the volume. Didn't catch that line, or just want to relive that awesome moment? Rewind! The power is in your hands. But maybe you are fine with the downsides of movie theaters, because there are some upsides to compen-

sate. For one thing movies have much better equipment. Better speakers, better quality, not to mention 3D. There is also the added effect of being part of an audience. People cheer when Superman shows up, affirming that he has been the good guy this whole time. I thought he was really just blurring the line, but the claps confirm my theory that he was really the good guy.

The only time when audience reactions actually matters in a movie is in regards to comedy, which is proven to be a very social thing. If you are watching a movie alone, chances say you will just exhale out of your nose, but with a crowd you will actually laugh. But you can still watch movies with your friends from the comfort of your home, if that part of the experience is important to you.

At home, movies are simply more pleasant. You don't have to be mindful of others, and more importantly you don't have to deal with others. Crying babies, overpriced bags of candy crinkling in a silent room, that one guy who decided a dark movie theater was the best place to answer phone calls and play angry birds for an hour. At home the power is in your hands. And with the rise of flat screen TVs and the fall of projectors, movie theaters are practically

just larger versions of your living room. The decision to ditch movie theaters will not worsen the movie experience. In addition, movie theaters didn't do very well in 2021, and they weren't sorely missed.



The only movie that brought in real money was Spiderman: No way home, which is one of the top grossing movies ever, gaining nearly \$2 billion worldwide and \$800 million domestically. However, this movie is an outlier. If you look at the amount of movies that typically make over \$100 million domestically, the common trend is that it is always above 30 movies. In 2020 it was 5 movies. In 2021 it was 11. The ability to bring movies to a wider audience on demand is not something we should shy away from.

Movie theaters are seen as this place designed specifically for the watching of movies. However, it doesn't take a genius to realize that movie theaters are actually worse for the viewing experience than your own living room. There are far more benefits to watching from home, and even more benefits in making movies available to people in their own homes.

# Killing The Greatest American Experience

by Anthony Equale

When someone mentions the phrase "first date", what do you think of? What about when you smell the aroma of popcorn? What do you think of then? Or when you see an advertisement for a cool new movie?...

When these instances happen, our brains are wired to immediately think of the movie theatre. The movie theater is one of the most relatable and homey places on Earth because everyone has had experiences with it. It is the place where memories are made. The place where you possibly had your first date. The place where you possibly had your first kiss. The place where you spent valuable time with your family. The place where you had fun as a kid. And the place where you still have fun as you grow older.

The rising popularity of streaming services such as Netflix, Disney plus, and Hulu has created a number of issues within the Cinema Entertainment industry. While streaming services provide great sources of entertainment for their viewers through the availability of thousands of movies and TV shows, they are ultimately



leading to the destruction of America's greatest tradition, going to the movies.

The movie theater creates an experience of its own that is matched by no other. No matter how great a surround system may be or however many inches your Samsung TV is, nothing can compare to the grandeur of a movie theatre. At the theatre, you are able to appreciate the reactions from the other viewers, focus on the movie without any distractions, and have a multitude of snacks and drinks at the ready.

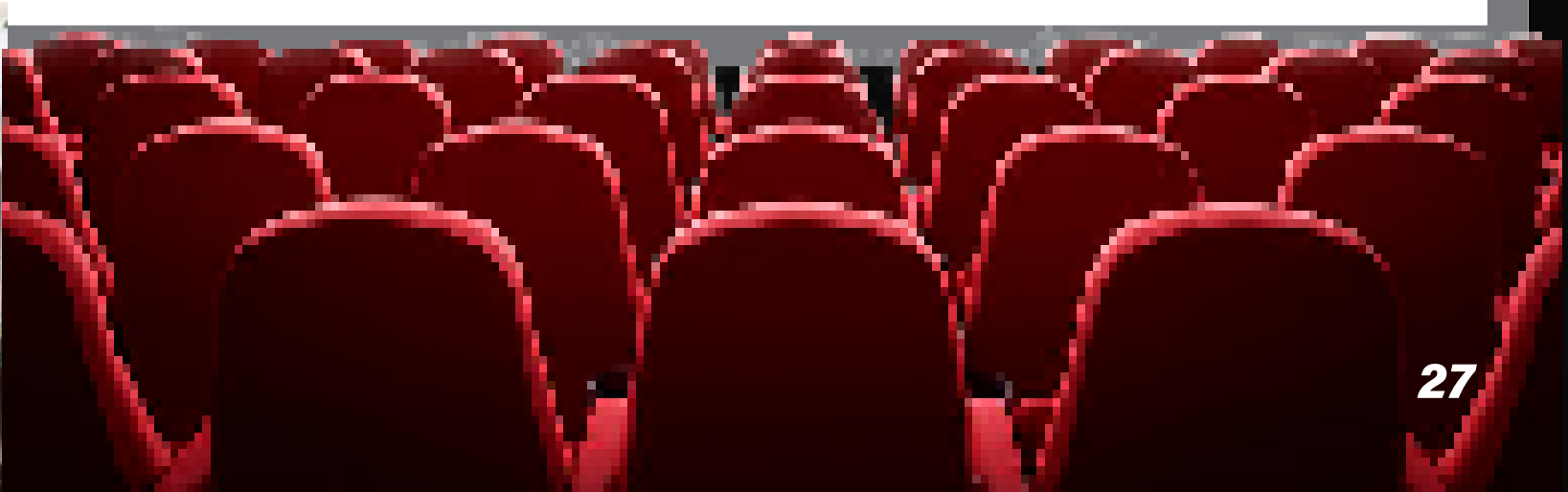


The combination of all these details makes the movie more powerful and a lot more interesting than it would be when watching it at home.

However, the greatest advantage of going to the movie theatre is that you will be of the first people to see a new film. Fighting your way to being a part of the first group of people to view a hit new movie is rewarding in itself because it allows you to have authority over those who have not gotten the chance to watch it. However, it is becoming more and more common for new films to skip the theatres

entirely and go public through the means of streaming services. This common practice needs to end. While it is fair for streaming services to update their sites with new movies produced in the past month, the first opportunity for the public to view the new film should be through the movie theater. Otherwise, the entire foundation of an important American tradition is destroyed.

Cinemas are still recovering from the impacts of the pandemic, and streaming services are further hindering their ability to return to normalcy. Movie theaters are worth saving because they are the means by which the valuable memories of children, teens, and adults are made. Therefore, whether it be with your girlfriend, wife, husband, friends, or even by yourself, go to your local movie theatre and take part in this great American experience.





# STH ROCKETRY

BY: MARK CHEEK



The St. Thomas rocketry team has a very successful past, competing at the highest level nationally many times. They compete in the Team America Rocketry challenge where hundreds of teams across the nation compete to qualify for 100 slots at the national event outside Washington D.C. Transporting a rocket through Washington Dulles airport is always an experience. I talked with David Torres about his time with the team and what he took from St. Thomas' only team that competes routinely on the national level.

"I enjoyed getting the opportunity to compete in the national competition in Washington D.C., freshman year, as it was both an exciting and challenging new experience," David Torres said.

Although there were many exciting times, Torres had to overcome many challenges as well, Fighting with mother nature to tune in his rocket to the target altitude (height).

"Our biggest struggle was having to deal with the multitude of variables and adjusting frequently to achieve our targets which could result in many additional launches" Torres said.

Although the team has not had the luxury recently due to Covid-19, Torres fondly remembers the post launch pilgrimage to Taco Bell.





# THE JEEP HOOD

By: Anthony Equale

Though it is apparent that the truck is the most popular car at ST. Thomas, the current rise of Jeeps amongst the student body is suprising. As of the 2021-2022 school year, St. Thomas High School was home to about sixteen Jeeps. These sixteen alpha males made a risky bet in deciding on a Jeep to be their first car; however, they made the right one, and as they drove their new babies out of the dealership they immediately became a part of the "Jeephood".

You have all heard of Eagle Brotherhood, which is where, no matter what, we will support and push one another to be the very best versions of ourselves. Similarly, Jeep-hood is the idea that owners of Jeeps support one another for the

"I'll be honest..." stated Jeep Driver, Andrew Roy, "the Jeep wasn't my first choice of vehicle; however, I am forever grateful that I am now a part of the Jeephood and would not change it for the world."

The Jeephood is one of the strongest support groups in the world because of its uniqueness. What makes a Jeep so unique is its long history, its recognizable structure, and its assertive dominance on the road. There is a reason that this iconic vehicle is one of the most popular 4-wheel machines on the road and that reason is that they are awesome. So, if you are in a process of figuring out which car to be your first, be open to the idea of the Jeep. Just a warning ... if you do end up going with a Jeep, there will be so many people asking for your autograph and girls all around you, so be ready.

purpose of making the Jeep brand look good. The effects of this Jeephood are extremely powerful and will last until death. The most powerful sign of this Jeep culture is through the "Jeep Wave". Now, only the drivers of Jeeps can fully understand the importance of the wave, but it is a form of recognition and acceptance that one Jeep driver gives to another, which reinforces the values of the Jeephood.

What makes a Jeep so special you ask? Well, driving a Jeep is like no other experience. Its drivers love adventure and acting spontaneously, and eventually, the Jeep defines who you are. Jeeps were originally made in the 1940s as forms of quick transportation for military troops during World War II. Thus, Jeeps were made to perform the best off-road. Jeeps are spacious, ride well, are extremely versatile in design, and have affordable parts. The greatest thing about Jeeps is that you can customize them to your own personal preference. Jeeps are practically the Legos of the car industry in the sense that you can take parts off and add new and improved parts back on.

Over the past decade, the popularity of Jeeps has increased dramatically. In fact, a survey that was gathered in 2020 revealed that 16% of American car buyers are open to the possibility of a Jeep. As seen in the data table to the right, since 2010, there has been a progressive increase in the yearly amount of Jeep Wranglers purchased each year. The growing interest in Jeeps may be attributed to a number of things; however, it is most likely due to its appeal to young adults. Jeep's primary demographic is the younger generation whether it be young adults or teenagers. For young guys, driving around in a jeep with the roof off, shades on, and music blaring sounds appealing when they are trying to impress girls. For young women, driving on the beach, with the wind blowing through their hair, and not having a care in the world sounds extremely appealing when they are just looking to have fun. Therefore, the primary reason for the rise in popularity of the Jeep Wrangler is due to its increased appeal to the younger generations. At St. Thomas, this appeal to the younger generation is extremely evident. As I contacted all the owners of Jeeps for purpose of research and photographs of their cars, it became clear that all of the drivers, no matter if it was the driver with the most jacked up jeep or the driver with the oldest Wrangler model, were extremely proud and happy to be a part of the Jeephood.

Year	Jeeps Sold
2005	79,017
2006	80,271
2007	119,243
2008	84,615
2009	82,044
2010	94,310
2011	122,460
2012	151,988
2013	155,502
2014	175,328
2015	202,702
2016	191,788
2017	190,522
2018	240,032
2019	228,042
2020	201,310
2021	204,610

Statistics of Jeeps Wranglers being sold over the past decade and a half.





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